



MCTLC Newsletter

*Our Mission is to Advance the Teaching of
World Languages and Cultures in Minnesota*



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October 2011

President-Elect's Letter

Early in my teaching career I was asked to help organize SPAIN TESOL as a charter member. It was the spring of my first year of teaching EFL to university students in Madrid, Spain. My first thought was, "Why? Why would I want to give my money and my time to a professional organization?" I didn't get it. Then an older, wiser colleague, Mary Rockwood, said to me, "Because this is bigger than just you and your money and your time. You will contribute to our profession, to lift it up to be as excellent as it can be. You can learn from others and share what you know, spread the wealth. You can be a part of something bigger than yourself." I never forgot her comments and they have guided my professional involvement ever since.

Decades later, in 1998 I happily returned to teaching from a stint in administration. I attended the MCTLC conference in October for inspiration. I can still remember some of the sessions I attended that continue to inspire my teaching today. First, "The Subjunctive can be Fun!" taught me more ways to fire up my students without scaring them off and to lead them to a good command of the Spanish subjunctive. I attended a CARLA strategy-based teaching session where I participated in a reflective activity that I still kick off every new class with. I purchased a text that has injected my teaching with content-based, critical thinking units. I left the conference energized, inspired and as a stronger professional.

Furthermore, the people you run into at conferences are fascinating. I have met keynote speakers whose messages transformed my teaching. I very often run into someone from my past. What a blast!

(Cont. on Page 4)

President's Letter

Each summer the board of directors meets for two days during what we call our summer retreat. Meeting for two days during the summer allows us to get far more work done that we can on an ordinary Saturday morning board meeting. This summer we met on July 29 and 30 at the board room at Northwestern College.

While you will be able to find the complete minutes on the website under the "About Us" tab, I would like to share some of the highlights of the meeting with you now. One of the things we did was adopt a mission statement. This was something we have been discussing for two years, so you can see it is not something we did lightly or hastily. Actually we brainstormed ideas and discussed the wording for many hours. The good part of that discussion is that we sharpened our vision and challenged each other to truly define what it is we have done for 50 years and what we should be doing in the future. I'm very proud to announce that the board has decided that our mission is "to advance the teaching of world languages and cultures in Minnesota." I love the simplicity and elegance of our statement. We are the only organization in our state with that mission, and if you identify with this mission, I hope you will encourage your colleagues and friends to join us as well. You do not need to be a language professional to identify with this mission. Parents, students, politicians, and community leaders who identify with this mission statement are welcome to become members.

We also looked through our recently organized archives in order to search for things we wanted to be part of our 50th anniversary celebration at the conference this fall. Each of us who spent some time digging through this material was impressed with how much people have sacrificed over the years to make this organization a reality. We found that what we want MCTLC to be and what the founders of the organization wanted it to be is very much summarized in our new mission statement, which in many ways is not new at all. It's the mission that our members have been passionate about since we were founded. Look for interesting facts about our history in the newsletter and on our Facebook page in the coming months. Renew your membership, come to the fall conference and make sure the mission stays alive!

Betty Lotterman, MCTLC President

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Presidents' Letters
- 2 News from Regions, Cuba
- 3 History, Fall Conference Info
- 4 2011 Fall Conference

News from Regions

An enthusiastic group of world language teachers from regions 9 and 10 gathered for an idea exchange and swap meet on Wednesday, Aug. 17, 2011 at Riverland Community College in Owatonna, MN. Teachers from the cities of Mankato, Owatonna, Chatfield, Rochester and a visitor from St. Louis Park were represented – they had the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas. Some of the schools in regions 9 and 10 include smaller cities and towns where the world language teacher is often the only person in his or her department. The group was very interested in learning new ideas and discovering some tips to make their lessons more challenging, exciting and interesting. Networking is a valuable component of support. The group decided that they would like to meet quarterly. *Barbara Judd, Regional Representative*

The Southwest Minnesota World Language Alliance (SMWLA) held its annual “Back-to-School Workshop” at Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall from 8:30 to 3:30 on August 9, 2011. Fifteen members attended the workshop whose theme was “Teaching Our Citizens to Become Global Citizens.” Members enjoyed sharing travel adventures and tips, and, as always, they profited from the “Best of SMWLA” as they shared favorite teaching tips and uses for technology in their classrooms. *Diane Leslie, Regional Representative*

News from Cuba

In June, I traveled with a delegation of educators through **Witness for Peace**. We visited educational institutions, levels PreK-16 in both Havana and Pinar del Río to study the educational system in Cuba. What we found was a system, which offers free education to all Cubans from birth through PhD. We were told, and found evidence to support the statistic, that the literacy rate is 99%, with most children reading by Kindergarten and/or First Grade. We also found that the medical care is free and of high quality. Doctors work in local clinics in the mornings, serving roughly between 100-200 families (more in some instances due to a shortage of doctors) and then do house calls in the afternoons. Graduates are secured jobs upon graduation and then work in their respective regions of the country after that. Upon returning from Cuba, I received the anticipated, ‘How was your trip?’ question and had a hard time coming up with a concise answer, even though our group had taken time to actually practice formulating our responses. The best answers I could come up with were, ‘Amazing’ and ‘life-changing.’ Not real academic in nature. Most Americans I have spoken with since returning then follow up with a question to the effect of, ‘Isn’t it illegal to travel to Cuba?’ They have almost ALL used a tone that suggests I have just confessed a crime to them and that someone may be coming to get me in trouble. Tourism by Americans to Cuba is illegal. It is not illegal for Americans to travel to Cuba for purposes of study and research, as long as they are with an organization licensed by the Department of Transportation. After July 1, less than ten organizations were licensed for People-to-People delegations, for the purposes of studying aspects of Cuban culture. Travel from Miami, Newark and now 7-8 more airports nationwide are allowed.

As we know, no system is perfect. In Cuba, our group of twenty educators saw a well-organized system of schools, serving the needs of the Cuban population within the confines of the resources at hand. There was not an overabundance of technology, but neither was their scarcity. School supplies were available, but difficult to come by and expensive. Most problems in Cuba are blamed on the ‘*bloqueo*’ (blockade), as the Cubans say, but it is hard to determine what is not affected by the blockade, as most everything is blocked by the policies of the U.S. As we interacted with students, teachers, community members and local Cubans, it quickly became obvious that this was a highly-educated society, an extremely literate one, and one able and willing to analyze the most recent research available to them via the internet (possible at work places) and apply it in the most efficient manner possible to help educate their children. As Americans, we bristle at the term ‘institution’, but efficient it is. We saw no instances of abuse or mistreatment of children in any institution we visited, nor did I feel that any speaker was parlaying the

Communist Party ideology. Most people spoke from the heart and with conviction of their beliefs, very interested in having us bring back their message of peace, and a pleading to end the Embargo so that U.S. citizens and Cuban citizens could interact more in the future. *Shannon Klint*

EF Travel Offers Scholarship for Professional Development:

As the World Leader in International Education, EF Educational Tours—the student travel division of EF Education First—is offering a full travel scholarship to the educators of Minnesota. Educators will be selected on the basis of their interest in and commitment to global education initiatives within their state. Selected recipients will travel to Beijing, Xi'an, and Shanghai, China for 10 days in June 2012. This Professional Development Scholarship will be a unique opportunity to earn professional development credit while discovering China with other like-minded educators. To apply please email Michael.Norskog@EF.com. The deadline for submissions is **November 4, 2011**.

Exploring our MCTLC History – Marjie Hay, MCTLC Historian

MN Department of Education releases the Model Learner Outcomes for World Language Education in 1989. In 1992, Outcome Based Education begins in MN and world language teachers begin networking and participating in workshops to design common curriculum. In 1989, John Janc's column, Let's Keep Current, debuts in the MLR and continues publication for over 20 years!

Our Golden Past, Our Golden Future: A Conference You Will Not Want to Miss

Because this is our 50th anniversary celebration, this conference will be special in many ways. The luncheon will be a gala affair with lots of door prizes and a chance to meet MCTLC's former presidents and Emma B. Birkmeier award winners. If you know retired teachers who have not come to the conference in a while, please invite them to this conference so we can all have a chance to share our experiences. But this conference is not only about our past, it is also about our future. And if you are a new teacher there are plenty of great reasons to attend the conference. The keynote address is "**Sisyphus Was a Language Teacher**" by John De Mado. A popular presenter at Central States and ACTFL conferences, he will be in Minnesota. John's hard-hitting insights into learning challenge the intellect. His provocative style stimulates thinking and professional growth, thus serving as a catalyst for change. Above all, humor abounds, serving to punctuate even the weightiest of topics. He will also be doing a three-hour workshop on Thursday on producing raps for your classroom, and a session on Friday on error correction in the classroom.

This year we are delighted to announce that we have approximately forty different breakout sessions! You can check the website at www.mctlc.org for complete descriptions. Note the diverse selection – there should be something here for everyone! Here are *just a few* of the Friday Break-Out Sessions:

1. Language Immersion Teacher Demand: 2011 and Beyond
2. Embedding Global Competency in World Language Instruction
3. Applying Integrated Performance Assessment in Chinese Language Learning
4. Error and Language Acquisition
5. Writing in Collaboration
6. Green Germany: Curricular Materials for School and University
7. The Calendar Method
8. *French or Foe* in the Classroom
9. Adding to Your Cultural Toolkit
10. Goethe – Up Close and Personal
11. Bridging Language and Content and Proficiency Levels
12. Chopsticks and Brushes Are Not the Only Tools You Give Your Students to Learn Chinese!
13. Reflections from a First Year Early Language Teacher
14. Activities for COMMUNITIES and CULTURE in the Language Classroom
15. *Le Système Éducatif*
16. Rater Training for Proficiency: What Do Teachers Say about Its Impact on Their Teaching
17. Get Them Talking With Art and Music
18. Preterite-Imperfect: Achieving Advanced-Low Levels
19. Using Languafolio for Chinese and Arabic: What the Data Show
20. Keep Students Engaged and Moving!
21. Midwest French Heritage
22. Cultural Experience: An Important Component of Mandarin Chinese Education in the USA
23. How to Engage Students in FLES Programs
24. *Kunst auf Deutsch*
25. Puppet Show: *The Adventures of Juan*
26. Keep Middle School Students Engaged!
27. Online Story Making
28. Interactive Global Activities
29. Empowering Yourself to Conduct Teacher Research
30. Moving from Reading for the Gist to Analysis
31. Ten Golden Reasons to Travel Abroad with Your Students
32. Assessing What Matters: Integrating Assessments in Curriculum and Native Language Culture
33. *Neuer Blick Berlin: multi-kulti und noch mehr!*
34. What Good Does a Semester Abroad do?

MCTLC Newsletter

Dr. David L. Paulson, Editor

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President-Elect's Letter (Cont. from P. 1, Col. 1)

Everyone who attends is as committed to excellence in our profession as you are. Besides gaining new insights, learning new strategies and networking with creative colleagues I always find "treasures" in the exhibit hall. Last year I bought an authentic *papier mâché* skull from Mexico just in time for *El Día de los Muertos* and years ago I found a miniature altar that my students love to look at. I have found tapes and books for my after school elementary program. There are also many rewards, such as fine French milled soap, silk scarves and silver jewelry. I have been working with the session content of our fall conference all summer. There is something for everyone. Whether you teach Chinese to elementary students or teach the methods course to future teachers there is a session for you. Whether you are looking to incorporate culture in a more meaningful way or want to start conducting your own action research, you will find a session that meets your expectations all through the conference schedule. To innovate your teaching, network with interesting people and reward yourself with treasures come to our conference in October. I look forward to seeing you there. Come share your love for languages and cultures! *Mary Thronð* MCTLC

President-elect

**FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONFERENCE – VISIT:
MCTLC.ORG**

Friday, October 21 2010 - 7:00am – 5:00pm

Earle Brown Heritage Center, 6155 Earle Brown Drive, Brooklyn Center, MN

YOU MAY REGISTER ON SITE!